

KNOW YOUR PHONE

Be Aware of 900 976 numbers.

900 / 976 numbers are pay-per-service calls. Dialing these phone numbers will always cost you money. They provide **information on a variety** of topics such as: financial matters, personal horoscopes, sports, and legal advice.

These numbers also provide the caller with entertainment such as: dial-a-joke, trivia, contests, dating services, and sexually explicit conversations.

They are also used to sell products such as books, perfumes, magazines, and travel packages.

The 900 / 976 numbers are created by companies calling themselves "information providers" and they often provide the caller with tape recorded messages, allowing the caller to select what they want to hear about by using the buttons on their touch tone phones.

Warning: Some 900 / 976 calls do not deliver what their ads suggest, and all these numbers you dial will show up on your monthly phone bill - some for \$2.00 per- minute or more.

Warning: Some 900 / 976 calls are repetitive, put callers on hold while they are paying a per minute charge, hang up in the middle of the call forcing the caller to call back and pay a higher first minute charge, charge a flat rate so that the call is expensive even if it is short and/or refer callers to another 900 / 976 number so that two calls must be made.

Warning: Be aware of international pay-per-services, and excess charges associated with making these calls. Some Caribbean countries can be dialed just as if you were calling another state. Before making international calls, check with your long distance phone company about the least expensive way to dial these numbers.

Know Your Rights Re: 900 / 976 numbers

You cannot lose your phone service for failing to pay charges for 900 /976 numbers you call, **although you may** lose your **right** to continue to make these types of calls.

Calls that cost more than \$2.00/minute must disclose the cost at the start of the call.

Callers who hear only the initial message and then immediately hang up may not be charged for the call.

Callers can get a refund for calls if they have a reasonable complaint, such as poor transmission quality, poor quality of the service, or a dispute over the amount of the 900 charge.

Complaints should be directed to your local phone company.

If you are unable to come to a resolution with your phone company then contact:

The Federal Communications Commission
Consumer Information Bureau
Consumer Complaints
445 12th Street, SW
Washington DC 20554

In Maine, you may call 1-800-452-4699 and a Consumer Specialist will assist you.

You may access our web page at: <http://www.state.me.us/mpuc/mtef.htm>

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